



Martha's Vineyard Commission
Landuse Planning Committee
P.O. Box 1447
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

April 1, 2023

Dear MVC,

We attended via Zoom the LUPC meeting on March 20, 2023. We remain very concerned about the negative impacts of this development. Below is our response to the LUPC set of possible conditions and the response by Stillpoint representatives.

- Possible Conditions 1A, 1B

PHA Response: This cautious approach to events with continual monitoring is something we support with the uncertainty of how impactful this will be in the State Road corridor and to our visitors and adjacent staff housing. With event attendees possibly projected at over 57,000, it is not appropriate or compatible with the location, traffic, and impact on the environment. The arboretum hosts a total of 16-20 thousand visitors per year. The suggestion by one abutter to install a traffic monitoring device is highly advisable to determine if the amount of events is realistic without severe impacts. The traffic and attendees per event should be monitored as a proof of concept in the operation of Stillpoint given the proposed hybrid events model.

- Possible Conditions 12

A final landscape plan for the property shall be submitted to the LUPC for review and approval prior to receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy.

PHA Response: Light and sound mitigation are of greatest concern to us. Looking at the current placement of parking, we object to the placement of the car parking areas closest to the barn, facing south. The parking lot layout and landscape screening would benefit from a professional Site Analysis employing a landscape architect. This is standard professional practice with a project of this size.

We energetically agree with the following:

- Stillpoint shall install landscaping (or fencing) sufficient to prevent vehicle, parking area, and barn lighting from spilling onto the Polly Hill Arboretum and Land Bank properties, regardless of the season.



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- As a direct abutter, the PHA requests that a review be conducted after a year of occupancy to gauge the effectiveness of the screening and lighting.
- Some points for clarification as abutters to Stillpoint. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) holds a conservation restriction on our property, established in 1997. The DCR determined the location of our two residential staff housing units (100 feet from Stillpoint, 50 feet further than the town-imposed setback) during initial conversations on siting. This location, sited within a clearing that experienced oak die-off in 2015, was ideal as it minimized tree loss and is in close proximity to a long-established utility road to our Visitor Center. The location was finalized in 2021 when it was determined to have the least impact on the existing oak woodland.

The potential for a third dwelling exists in the future. The PHA must first demonstrate to the DCR we can successfully meet the existing restrictions.

While the PHA has expertise in native plants and woodland ecology, we are not master planners. The approval of this project and its land use is not reliant on the PHA's production of a landscape plan since no conditions are placed on our properties with the exception of the existing CR.

Thank you all for this opportunity to share our thoughts and concerns.



Timothy M. Boland
Executive Director



Emily Ellingson
Curator-Assistant Director